

4. Appropriateness
5. Resources of grammar and expression.

How is the Speaking sub-test assessed?

The Speaking sub-test is scored by experienced assessors who receive ongoing training, monitoring and feedback on their performance after each administration of the test.

Assessors listen to the audio recording of each interview and give a score for each of the five criteria previously mentioned, using a detailed set of level descriptors to guide their decisions. The assessor gives a set of five scores for each role-play and then decides on a final set of five scores for the overall performance across the two role-plays. The five criteria are equally weighted in the scoring and analysis process.

Each candidate's recording is graded by two assessors independently. Neither assessor knows the scores the other assessor gives nor the scores awarded to the candidate for other sub-tests.

The two separate sets of raw scores for each candidate's recording are analyzed for the whole group of candidates taking the subtest at the same administration.

After the initial analysis, any recordings which have misfitting scores (i.e. which do not fit the pattern expected for the analysis) are re-scored by a third assessor (again without any knowledge of the previous scores given) and the statistical analysis is repeated.

So the final score for each candidate's recording is not a simple average of the two (or three) assessors' raw scores. Instead, it is a 'fair score', compensating for particular assessors' severity or leniency.

How to prepare students for OET Speaking Sub-test?

The Speaking sub-test is an individual interview that takes around 20 minutes. It is profession-specific. The candidates take this part of OET using materials specifically produced for their profession – a

nurse does role-play for nursing, a dentist does role-play for dentistry, and so on.

Structure: In each interview, the candidate's identity and profession are checked by the interlocutor and there is a short warm-up conversation about their professional background.

Role-plays: There are two role-plays, and the candidate has **2-3 minutes to prepare** for each. The role-plays take about **five minutes** each. The candidates receive information for each role-play on a card, which they keep while they do the role-play. They may write notes on the card if they want. The card explains the situation and what they are required to do. **If they have any questions about the content of the role-play or how a role-play works, they can ask the interlocutor before starting.**

Candidates are assessed on their performance in the two role-plays only. The whole interview is recorded and it is this audio recording that is assessed: the interlocutor is not assessing the candidate.

The interlocutor follows a script so that the interview structure is closely similar for each candidate. He/she also has detailed information to use in each role-play.

What speaking skills are tested?

The role-plays are based on typical workplace situations and reflect the demands made on the professional in those situations. Different role-plays are used for different candidates at the same test administration.

In each role-play, the candidate takes his/her professional role (e.g. as a nurse) while the interlocutor plays a patient/client or sometimes a patient's relative or career. For veterinary science, the interlocutor is the owner or career of the animal.

The role-plays in the Speaking sub-test allow candidates to demonstrate that they can communicate in a typical workplace situation for their professions. For example, they can:

- ask questions to the patient.
- answer questions from the patient.
- engage with a variety of patient types, e.g. different ages, different health problems, different concerns.